CONDUCTING REFERENCE CHECKS

Checking the professional references of a candidate is one of the most important steps in the pre-hiring process.

Considerations
- Questions should ALWAYS be directly related to the position under recruitment.
- Be mindful that the same discrimination laws apply to interviewing also apply to reference checking.
- Professional references should be individuals who worked directly with the candidate within the last 5-7 years.
- A signed UHM Candidate Release Form by the candidate authorizes you to contact their former supervisors.
- Pay attention to what former supervisors/colleagues “do not say” during your conversation.
- Questions to Ask
  - Ask behavioral-based, open-ended questions.
  - Avoid yes or no queries.
  - Avoid questions that are protected by law (i.e., marital status, family, religion, age, health issues, etc.)
- BE CONSISTENT and ask the same questions to all references so that you can weigh the responses equally.
- Reference checks by email is highly discouraged.
- Reference checks should be documented in writing and included as part of the official recruitment file.

Process
- Introduce yourself to the reference and state the purpose of your phone call.
- Confirm that it is an appropriate time to call, or schedule an upcoming date/time.
- Confirm that the candidate has listed their name as a reference, or confirm that the candidate has signed an UHM release form and you are contacting the individual for a reference check.
  - If the reference requests a copy of the signed UHM release form, you may provide it to them.
- Summarize and describe the position for which the candidate has applied.
REFERENCE CHECK FOR ________________

Name of Reference: _________________________________________________
Title: _____________________________________________________________
Company: _________________________________________________________
Phone: ____________________________________________________________
Date/Time: ________________________________________________________
Conducted By: ______________________________________________________

1) In what professional capacity do you know the candidate and length of time?

2) What were/is the candidate’s job responsibilities in your organization?

3) What has been your experience supervising the candidate?

4) Why is he/she [looking to leave/leaving] his/her position?

5) How would you describe his/her personal leadership style?

6) In a stressful situation, describe how the candidate would react.

7) Describe how he/she handles difficult people.

8) What are the candidate’s three strongest qualities?

9) Are there any areas of development that the candidate should focus on?

10) What was/are the candidate’s key accomplishments or impact on your organization?

11) What do we need to be aware of to ensure that we create an environment that will help the candidate succeed?

12) Do you feel the candidate is suitable for the job he/she is seeking with our organization?

13) Would you rehire/want the candidate? Why or why not? This is a MUST ASK question!